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July 26, 1957

✓ MOSCOW TALKS WILL COVER ARMS DEBTS

Damascus, in Arabic to Syria and the Near East, July 25, 1957, 1615 GMT--M

(Text)

His Excellency Premier Sabri al-Asali has made a statement about the departure for Moscow of His Excellency Khalid al-Azm, Minister of State and Acting Defense Minister, His Excellency Fakhir al-Kayyali, Minister of Public Works and Communications, and Maj. Gen. Tawfiq Nizma ad-Din, commander of the armed forces. He said that the aim of the delegation's visit to Moscow is to strengthen friendly relations between the two countries and to thank the Soviet Union for its noble attitudes toward Arab problems--in particular its humane and splendid attitude toward the sinful tripartite aggression against sister Egypt.

His Excellency Premier Al-Asali continued: "Syria, Egypt, and all the liberated Arab countries are desirous of befriending those who show them friendliness and will oppose anyone who shows them hostility."

His Excellency said: "During its stay in Moscow the Syrian delegation will discuss with the Soviet Government certain details connected with the financial payments due from Syria in return for arms purchased from the Soviet Union."

Meanwhile, a report published by TASS says that the Syrian delegation began its discussions with the Soviet Government today. The Syrian mission arrived in Moscow from Prague yesterday by air. It was welcomed at the airport by Kuzmin, Deputy Premier of the Soviet Union; Marshal Zhukov, Soviet Defense Minister; the Syrian Ambassador in Moscow, the embassy's staff, and a number of Soviet officials.

July 29, 1957

ASALI DENIES SEEKING AID IN MOSCOW

Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, July 29, 1957, 0900 GMT--M

(Text)

Damascus--Syrian Premier Sabri al-Asali said today that Syria will not accept aid from anyone and will not accept domination by anyone. Al-Asali was replying to a press question about his opinion on the New York HERALD TRIBUNE report that the departure of the Syrian economic delegation under Acting Defense Minister Khalid al-Azm to Moscow aims at asking for economic aid from the Soviet Union in a sum varying between 100 and 150 million dollars because of an economic collapse which now faces Syria.

He said that Syria's economic situation is sound and there is no need for aid from any side. What was published about the alleged economic collapse was fabricated and is a lie. He went on to say that Syria did not accept aid in the past and will not accept it at present or in the future, because he will not be an appendage to anybody and will not accept the domination of anyone in the various political, economic, and military fields.

WEST SHOWS WORRY OVER MOSCOW MEETING

Damascus, in Arabic to Syria and the Near East, July 26, 1957, 1615 GMT--M

(Text)

At a time when world public opinion is very much sympathizing with and supporting the struggle of a small and freedom-loving people in Oman and Muscat, Western political circles, on the other hand, are noting with great concern the unexpected meeting which was held in Moscow between certain high political personalities and Soviet personalities. These Westerners have not been able to conceal their increasing anxiety at the development of relations between Egypt and Syria on the one hand and the Soviet Union on the other. They also feel that their attempts to disrupt relations between the two parties will not be successful and that the policy of complete frankness pursued by Moscow in her relations with Damascus and Cairo has triumphed over the policy of deceit and prevarication pursued by the West in its relations with the Arab East.

We do not doubt that the fears of the West can be basically attributed to its superficial understanding of the reality of the new Arab awakening and the political maturity enjoyed by the leaders of thought in Syria and Egypt.

The vacuum theory, which clearly manifested itself some time ago, and which followed many Western military and political plans in the Middle East, shows not only the rigidity of Western political thought, but also the imperialist bases will not change nor will the imperialists be able to realize that Arab nationalism has actually filled all vacuums that could exist in this area. Arab nationalism is an adequate guarantee against any foreign attempt, from whatever source, to infiltrate into the Arab East.

Syria and Egypt represent this sound national policy, and since they follow this policy, they cannot relinquish any part of their absolute sovereignty, freedom, and viewpoints in their march toward achieving the interests of their countries. That is why positive neutrality is a sound basis for their policy. The Soviet Union realized the true situation in the Arab East and so respected the neutrality of the two countries, and supported and founded its relations with Egypt and Syria on the basis of complete respect for the full sovereignty of the two countries and their liberation policy.

As a result of this realization by the Soviet Union, Arab-Soviet relations continued to improve, and shortly afterwards the shadow of doubt which imperialism instilled in the hearts of the statesmen of this country with regard to the intentions of the Soviet Union faded out. Moscow confirmed on many occasions that it follows a firm and unalterable policy and that it pursues this policy with complete frankness without any attempt to doubt across the Arabs.

The understanding which has taken place between Moscow on the one hand and Egypt and Syria on the other, as partly manifested in the recent Moscow meeting, can only be a natural result of the reciprocal respect which both sides show one another, and the confidence of both sides in the frank policy faithfully pursued by the other side.

As we have already said, the West looks on the recent Moscow meeting with great doubt and anxiety. Had the West tried to understand Syrian-Egyptian policy in a manner devoid of selfishness and imperialist mentality, it would have realized that any rapprochement between the Soviet Union and Egypt and Syria could only have taken place on the basis of the Soviet Union's respect for the policy believed in and pursued by Syria and Egypt--a policy which does not permit the Soviet Union to enter the Middle East although it permits the extermination of imperialist plots infiltrating into the area and dominating it.

AL-BITAR DISCUSSES OIL-N, ARAB TIES

AL-BITAR, in Arabic to Syria and the Near East. July 29, 1957, 1800
CMT-1

[Excerpts from Statement of Syrian Foreign Minister Salah al-Din al-Bitar]

The minister was then asked to clarify the aims of the current talks in Moscow, and said: "The aims were announced in the statement made 2 days ago by the Premier. Briefly, the two parties are trying to settle certain outstanding financial questions."

The foreign minister added: "The main purpose of the trip by the Syrian delegation is to make attempts with all friendly states, including Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, the Soviet Union, Italy, and Belgium, to secure their technical and material participation in the implementation of certain vital projects that are necessary for Syria's economic development, on a purely commercial basis and in no way affecting the policy of active neutrality pursued by Syria." X

Aug. 1, 1957

AL-ASALI WELCOMES SOVIET ASSISTANCE

✓ Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, July 31, 1957, 1600 GMT--M

(Text)

Syrian Premier Sabri al-Asali today welcomed "every assistance which might be offered to us by the Soviet Union or other parties, provided this assistance has no strings attached which would derogate from our sovereignty and independence for which we paid dearly."

Al-Asali expressed this view when asked to comment on a report published by AL-RAI AL-AAM of Damascus by its correspondent in Moscow that the official Syrian delegation now visiting there has reached an agreement with the Soviet authorities to assist Syria by reducing the prices of contracts concluded with Russia from 1.3 billion Syrian pounds to 400 million pounds only, this figure to be paid in installments over a period of 10 years.

Al-Asali said: "If Syria signs unconditional economic agreements, it only seeks by so doing to implement its major projects. The imperialist powers stipulated terms and restrictions for the implementation of these projects which aimed only at strengthening their imperialist influence."

Tasam al-Jabiri, chairman of the parliamentary foreign affairs committee, in commenting on the same report said that this step by Syria "cannot possibly be construed or considered as a departure from the policy of positive neutrality as pursued by Syria." He added: "Our nation should be strong and should seek to acquire this strength from any source. This is because we cannot preserve neutrality while being weak."

Aid Offer Confirmed

Paris, AFP, Radioteletype in English to the Americas, July 31, 1957, 1843 GMT--

(Excerpts)

Damascus--Syrian Premier Sabri al-Asali said at a press conference today that according to information reaching him the Soviet Union had offered "all possible aid for the development of Syria's economy and the financing of its projects." Without mentioning the amount of aid offered, Al-Asali said: "According to information reaching us, the initiatives of the Syrian delegation were crowned with success."

Aug. 2, 1957

MOSCOW DELEGATION GIVEN FULL AUTHORITY

Cairo, Egyptian Home Service, Aug. 1, 1957, 2000 GMT--M

(Text)

Syrian Minister Education Hani as-Sibai today stated that the Syrian cabinet had decided to empower the Syrian delegation now visiting Moscow to negotiate with the Soviet Union "over all matters and subjects through which Syrian would attain power and progress in all fields." The Minister said that the delegation is expected to return from Moscow next week.

The Syrian delegation headed by Khalid al-Azm left for Moscow last week.

Aug. 6, 1957

MOSCOW GUARANTEES SYRIAN SECURITY

Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 5, 1957, 0900 GMT--M

(Excerpts)

A dispatch from Moscow published today in the Damascus paper AR-RAI AL-AAM states that Syrian ambassador in Moscow Jamal al-Farra has been quoted as saying that it can be asserted that Syria's military requirements are now secured as a result of the talks carried out by the Syrian official delegation in Moscow. The newspaper's correspondent in Moscow says that Nikita Khrushchev, leader of the Soviet Communist Party, asserted to the delegation headed by Khalid al-Azm, acting Syrian Minister of Defense, that the Soviet Union adheres to the policy of supporting the Arabs, and that it will never deviate from this policy.

The correspondent adds that Khrushchev told the delegation that Syria's safety is guaranteed, that the Soviet Union will not permit any aggression against it. Khrushchev said he appreciates Syria's policy and attitude and added that Russia seeks nothing from Syria or any Arab country. Russia, he said is interested only in helping these countries oppose the establishment of foreign military bases on their soil. The correspondent says that the meeting at which this discussion took place was attended by Khrushchev, Soviet Premier Bulganin, and Soviet Minister of Defense Marshal Zhukov.

Ambassador al-Farra asserted to the correspondent of the Syrian paper AR-RAI AL-AAM that the new agreement with the Soviet Union "will help Syria's economic growth and development and will also help Syria carry out its productive projects."

Khalid al-Azm and Dr. Fakhir al-Kayyali returned to Moscow yesterday from a tour of Soviet towns. Al-Azm told the AR-RAI AL-AAM correspondent that the countries which do not cooperate politically with the West will not be choked economically. There were many ways to insure their trade and economic progress, he said. Dr. al-Kayyali said: "The Soviet leaders asserted to us that they do not want bases, oil, or any concessions in our countries in return for their aid to us."

(Editor's Note: Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 3, 1957, 1010 GMT reported that Foreign Minister al-Bitar told ANA that the no government statement concerning the agreement with the USSR will be made until the Syrian delegation returns from Moscow and the cabinet reviews its report.)

Aug. 7, 1957

PRAGUE STOPOVER--It was announced Aug. 6 in Damascus that the official Syrian delegation to Moscow will delay its scheduled date of return to Syria because it has decided to stop in Prague according to Khalil al-Kallas, Minister of Economy, who added that the delegation will arrive in Prague Aug. 7 "for conducting certain economic talks with its leaders." The delegation had already visited Prague on its way to Moscow, and it was previously stated that the delegation is returning to Damascus Aug. 7. (Beirut ANA, Aug. 6, 1957, 1620 GMT--M)

Aug. 7, 1957

MIDDLE EAST REVIEW

(Broadcasts from 0001 GMT to 2400 GMT Aug. 6)

Syrian-Soviet Communique:

Damascus radio carries the official communique signed in Moscow on Aug. 6 at the conclusion of discussions between representatives of the Syrian and Soviet governments. Details of the communique are also given by Cairo radio. According to the communique, the Soviet Union will give Syrian economic and technical aid. It also notes that further talks will be held on Syrian-Soviet trade. The MIDDLE EAST NEWS AGENCY says the Syrian delegation's return to Syria will be delayed because it has decided to visit Prague on its way home.

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MIDDLE EAST REVIEW

(Broadcasts from 0001 to 2400 GMT Aug. 7)

Aug. 8, 1957

Syrian-Soviet Relations:

The ARAB NEWS AGENCY and Cairo radio report on an interview given the Moscow correspondent of the Damascus paper AR-RAI AL-AAM by USSR Communist Party Secretary Khrushchev in which he "affirms that the Soviet Union will assist Syria and other Arab countries against any aggression." The ANA report adds that representatives of chambers of agriculture in various Syrian provinces will also go to Moscow "at their own expense" to discuss Syrian-Soviet cooperation in agricultural matters and that the Syrian cabinet has asked Hamid al-Khuja to visit certain East European countries in an effort to get them to increase their imports of Syrian products.

A Damascus commentary on the decision of the USSR to grant economic aid to Syria contrasts the no-strings-attached aid of the Soviet Union with the "messenger aid" offered by the West, which "always carries with it conditions that endanger the recipient country's sovereignty and independence." The point that the Soviet aid will not affect Syrian independence is stressed by the Syrian Propaganda Minister in a statement reported by ANA. The agency also reports Syrian Foreign Minister al-Bitar as saying his government has received "general information" about the agreement with the USSR but will get the details from the delegation when it returns next week.

Israeli commentator Moshe Pearlman sees a tieup between the recent Syrian attacks along the Israeli border and the new Syrian-Soviet arms deal. The attacks, he says, were used to create an atmosphere of crisis in order to strengthen the position of Colonel Sarraj and justify the acceptance of Soviet arms. He adds that the USSR, having suffered setbacks in Jordan and Saudi Arabia, was anxious to supply arms as a means of regaining prestige in the area.

TASS reports the departure from Moscow of the Syrian Government delegation after its talks with Soviet leaders. The text of the communique, on the visit, previously summarized by TASS, in broadcast both in Arabic and on the home service.

The Czechoslovak home service and CTK devote great attention to the arrival of the Syrian Minister of Defense, using the occasion to point out Czechoslovakia's growing friendly relations with Syria.

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S. S. R. I. A

Aug. 6, 1957

U.S. AID HELPS SYRIA WHERE WEST FAILED

Damascus, in Arabic to Syria and the Near East, Aug. 7, 1957, 1115 GMT--M

(Excerpts)

Syria's liberal policy in the international field is based on clear and frank bases. Foremost among these is the principle of cooperation with all states on the basis of equality, and the principle of positive neutrality. Recent events have proved that such an independent and liberal policy was severely opposed by the Western imperialist powers which want their relations with small states to be like that of overloads and subject people.

These imperialist powers have an avowed Middle East policy aimed at making the countries of the area remain permanently backward in industry and weak in military matters, a state of affairs which would make it easy for them to play havoc with the potentialities of the area, impose their influence and domination on it, and assume control of its resources for the benefit of millionaires in the Western capitals.

God has willed that most of the Middle East countries should obtain political independence, and now there remains before them a continued hard struggle for achieving economic independence without which there could be no political independence. Syria was one of the states of this area which freed its economy from subordination to foreign powers.

On this basis, Syria has laid down its economic development programs, paying close attention to raising the standard of living of the people and increasing the prosperity of the country. But the implementation of the huge projects entailed in these programs requires, in addition to natural potentiality, technical skill and heavy equipment which has to be obtained through the assistance of countries which have already gone ahead of us in these fields. In the course of achieving economic development, Syria has declared more than once that she is prepared to accept aid from any country, provided the aid is unconditional and does not affect our independence and sovereignty in any way.

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SYRIA
Aug. 8, 1957

The world's economic institutions which could make available loans and technical aid in this regard are, however, greatly influenced by American policy which is strongly linked with the policy of the Western imperialist powers. When approached for aid for the implementation of a certain project largely or wholly beneficial to the people, the Western powers themselves withdraw their hand and offer meager aid. Furthermore, their aid, even overlooking its value, always carries with it conditions unacceptable to a country which wants to preserve its prestige and protect its sovereignty and independence.

What is even worse is that the Western powers do not really wish to help, nor do they want us to obtain aid from others. In short, they stand as obstacles to the realization of our economic development.

Soviet Aid

The joint communique issued in Moscow yesterday, following the talks of the Syrian Government delegation with the Soviet Government, came as an important step in wiping out all traces of the blockade which the Western imperialist powers are attempting to impose on Syria. Syria, which has always vowed to abide by the principle of positive neutrality and cooperation with all states on the basis of complete equality, has found the communique a source on which it can rely in obtaining needed technical and economic aid without affecting its independence and sovereignty.

In offering this (aid--Ed.) the Soviet side has no intention of dominating Syria. On the contrary, its attitude is derived from its appreciation of the problems placed by imperialism in the way of Syria's economic development. The Soviet side, therefore, wishes to help Syria to wipe out these problems.

It is to be understood that the results reached by the Syrian side in Moscow are in full harmony with the policy of neutrality and the Bandung Conference resolutions which constitute the main bases of Syria's foreign policy.

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SYRIA
Aug. 8, 1957

KHRUSHCHEV SAYS USSR GAVE ALL ASKED

Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 7, 1957, 0915 GMT--M

(Text)

Damascus--The Damascus daily AR-RAI AL-AAM today carries an interview given its special Moscow correspondent by Nikita Khrushchev, First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In it Khrushchev affirms that the Soviet Union will assist Syria and other Arab countries against any aggression. Khrushchev says that Syria can rely upon peace-loving peoples in the world in safeguarding its security, and that Israel exposes its existence as a state to danger if it perseveres in its aggression.

Speaking of the Syrian-Soviet negotiations, Khrushchev says that "these negotiations, which were crowned with success, are considered the symbol of unconditional cooperation. The Soviet Government has given Syria whatever its delegation has asked for, demanding nothing in return which may affect Syria's sovereignty and independence."

Regarding the Palestine question, Khrushchev says: "It can be solved in a manner acceptable to the peoples of the region if foreign efforts to impose a settlement are done away with."

Hamid al-Khuja, Syrian Minister of Agriculture, will leave for the Soviet Union at the end of this month, at the invitation of the Soviet Minister of Agriculture, to visit the Soviet agricultural fair. He will be accompanied by George Khuri, director of the Syrian agricultural bank. Representatives of the chambers of agriculture in various Syrian provinces will also go to Moscow at their own expense to hold discussion regarding agricultural cooperation between Syria and the Soviet Union.

At its meeting last night, the Syrian cabinet asked Hamid al-Khuja to visit certain East European countries which import Syrian cotton in order to discuss with authorities there the question of increasing their purchases from Syria. The countries which Al-Khuja will visit during his tour were not named.

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SYRIA
Aug. 8, 1957

Secret Naval Support

Paris, AFP, Radioteletype in French to the Americas, Aug. 7, 1957,
1517 GMT--E

(Text)

Beirut--Quoting an "informed diplomatic source," the pro-Egyptian Lebanese paper AS-SIYASAH has published some sensational details on the Syrian-Soviet talks which have just ended in Moscow with the conclusion of a treaty of assistance in all fields. According to the paper, one of the clauses of the agreement provides for the arrival at the Syrian port of Latakia in the near future of several naval units, including two submarines, the USSR has given Syria.

According to AS-SIYASAH, the USSR has promised to support Syria against any aggression "wherever it might come from." The USSR would supply Syria with "defensive armaments" amounting to 350 million Syrian pounds to be repaid in 20 annuities, the Lebanese paper adds. In addition to the naval units, including the two submarines, Syria would receive modern artillery material including radar-controlled antiaircraft guns.

AS-SIYASAH gives some details about the provisions made for the training of Syrian naval and artillery specialists in the handling of the new equipment. It has been agreed, the paper says, that 120 Syrian army and naval officers will be trained at the Polish base of Gdynia; 60 artillery men will at the same time take special courses in Czechoslovakia. As part of the agreements, the Syrian air force will receive new shipments of MIG-17's and jet bombers of the Ilyushin type. A Syrian air force mission will go to the USSR to familiarize the pilots and unit commanders with the handling of these aircraft.

AS-SIYASAH also gives details of the economic aspects of the agreements signed in Moscow. Over a period of 4 years, Syria would receive 650 million Syrian pounds "to make possible the industrial and agricultural development of the country as well as the big works program." Two-thirds of this sum would be repaid in 10 annuities in the form of Syrian merchandise. The series of agreements ends, the paper says, with a cultural convention which, among other things, provides for the exchange of education missions, professors, and of publications.

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SYRIA

Aug. 8, 1957

Aid Blocs Imperialists

Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 7, 1957, 1600 GMT--M

(Text)

Commenting on the Syrian-Soviet joint communique, which was issued last night, Salih Aqil, the Syrian Minister of State for Propaganda and Broadcasting, said: "The communique was frank as it showed that the economic and technical aid which the Soviet Union granted to Syria was unconditional and that it would not lead to any Soviet interference, internally or externally."

Aqil added: "From this, we see that the Syrian delegation asserted two points: First, adherence to positive neutrality and nonalignment with any camp or pact no matter how important it was; second, the securing of economic aid which will undoubtedly be a strong pillar that will bolster our political path and will block all imperialist tactics which seek to disperse our ranks both internally and externally."

Aqil went on to say: "In addition to the benefits which it will confer on the military force, the economic aid will undoubtedly support the industrialization move in the country and will insure funds for many projects and schemes such as irrigation, railway, and other projects. It is only natural that these projects will insure our economic stability." Syrian Foreign Minister Sa'ad ad-Din al-Bitar, replying to a question about whether the government received detailed information from the Syrian delegation on the results of its discussions and agreements with the Soviet Government, said: "The government received some general information. The government will become acquainted with full details from the delegation after its return."

Al-Bitar added that the delegation which arrived in Prague today will spend a few days in Czechoslovakia to complete the discussions begun with the Czechoslovak officials before its departure for Moscow. The delegation is expected to return to Damascus around the middle of next week.

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MIDDLE EAST REVIEW

(Broadcasts from 0001 GMT to 2400 GMT Aug. 8)

Aug. 9, 1957

Syrian-Soviet Relations:

There are a considerable number of reports from Middle East transmitters on reaction to the outcome of the Syrian-USSR negotiations. According to the ARAB NEWS AGENCY, while many Syrian statesmen have expressed their views in support of the agreement, both the opposition People's Party and the Socialist Resurrection Party--the latter is participating in the Syrian Government--have decided to reserve judgment until they get the full details of the agreement. Syrian Education Minister as-Sibai told ANA that Syria needed the Soviet aid because of the "partial economic blockade" imposed on Syria by the West. He also said Syria "abandoned the idea of launching a domestic loan in view of the harmful propaganda which aroused the citizens' doubts about the economic situation."

A Damascus radio commentary says that Syria was subjected to "an unprecedented economic and political campaign" which lost her a "large portion of her markets" and possibilities for developing her industry and agriculture. That is why the Soviet Union, appreciating Syria's fight to preserve her independence, "felt that Syria ought to be compensated for her sacrifices" and thus was quick to offer aid on the basis of equality, the commentary adds. It also notes that the climate for such aid was prepared by the visits of Shepilov to Syria and Quwwatli to Moscow.

The Beirut paper AS-SIYASAH is quoted by ANA as saying that the Soviet-Syrian agreement indicates the bankruptcy of Secretary Dulles' policies. The same agency reports the Beirut paper AN-NAHAR as saying that the results of the Syrian visit to Moscow are still to be seen. The paper predicts increased Western pressure against Syria and that Syria will become somewhat of a stranger to her neighbors. ANA reports that the Syrian Chamber of Deputies will be summoned to an extraordinary session to ratify the Syrian-Soviet agreement.

Cairo's Hebrew program reports on an interview with "members of the USSR Supreme Soviet" published in the Egyptian paper AL-MASA. The Soviet members are reported as saying that the USSR will supply "all the economic aid requested by the Arabs" and that Egypt "always has the right to demand the evacuation of UNEF from its territory." An Israeli Arabic program carries "a sincere word to the Syrian President from a common enemy," pointing out that the dangers threatening Syria are due to the activities of the "foolhardy young colonel" heading the Deuxieme Bureau urging the President to guide Syria in a new direction.

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SYRIA

Aug. 9, 1957

SHEPILOV PAVED WAY FOR USSR AID GRANT

Damascus, in Arabic to Syria and the Near East, Aug. 8, 1957, 1615 GMT--M

(Text)

Syria has registered a new step toward establishing the pillars of its full independence and the basis of its new policy, and toward insuring the future of its economy. The agreements concluded in Moscow were a natural outcome of the concurrence of Syrian and Soviet views with regard to the need for Syria to preserve its full sovereignty and to continue to pursue the policy of positive neutrality.

During past months Syria was subjected to an unprecedented economic and political campaign. But she was able to emerge from this campaign triumphant and proud. However, she lost a large portion of her economic market and huge potentialities which could have helped tremendously in the development of her industry and agriculture. It has become quite obvious to the Soviet Union that Syria is anxious to preserve her independence and refuses to be subservient to any foreign influence. It has also become clear that Syria is fully and truly determined to defend and strengthen her foreign policy, which repudiates military pact; and alignment to either of the world blocs. The Soviet Union felt that Syria ought to be compensated for her sacrifices for the sake of preserving her sovereignty, and thus showed readiness to offer technical and financial aid on the basis of equality of sovereignty, respect for Syria's policy, and nonintervention in Syria's affairs.

The climate for such aid was prepared when Soviet Foreign Minister Shepilov visited Syria, and when Syrian President Shukri al-Quwatli visited the Soviet Union at the head of a large Syrian delegation. These discussions then developed into frank and clear agreements whose principles and bases were enumerated in the joint communique which was released last Tuesday.

There is no doubt that the activity in the economic field which will follow the release of this communique will be the basic element in developing Syrian economy, and will supply it with the essential impetus which will boost the standard of living here to new levels. Should this Soviet aid, which is definitely based on specific loans, and the offering of essential technical aid make Syria feel secure with regard to the future of its sons and daughters, then it will also make Syria prove to the neighboring Arab governments that the policy of nonalignment is a successful policy.

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SYRIA
Aug. 9, 1957

Syria will also be able to prove that a people determined to dismiss foreign influence is capable of achieving its full aspirations by preserving its independence and freedom without neglecting its vital and essential economic projects for the prosperity of its economy and the development of its society.

Officials Nail Agreement

Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 8, 1957, 0930 GMT--M

(Excerpts)

Damascus--The Syrian-Soviet agreement has been received with interest by political and popular circles and the press here. Many statesmen have expressed their views in support of the agreement.

Hani as-Sibai, Minister of Education, last night expressed his satisfaction with the agreement since "our country is in a state of a semi-economic blockade conducted by the Western states with a view to opposing the present regime and opposing us for every action the government carries out abroad." As-Sibai said that the agreement secures the disposing of Syrian wheat and cotton products and likewise secures the implementation of the extraordinary budget--for development projects--based upon revenues which Syria could not secure nor obtain "because of the harmful propaganda and the Western states' opposition to us."

For example, he said, among the revenues which the extraordinary budget depended upon were foreign loans. "We sought several times to obtain a loan from the international bank but in vain. We could not conclude any loan with this bank because of its political conditions affecting our independence and impelling us to follow the West's bandwagon. Therefore, we have rejected these conditions." We have also abandoned launching a domestic loan in view of the harmful propaganda which aroused the citizens' doubts over the economic situation."

As-Sibai affirmed that the Syrian-Soviet agreement was "unconditional." The agreement, he added, will secure for us the necessary appropriations, machines, equipment, and studies besides dealing with part of our debts--he means the installments of the arms deals concluded by Syria.

Mazhar ash-Shurbaji, deputy of the National (Al-Watani) Party, said that the agreement came "in accordance with the country's requirements and in line with its sovereignty and independence, and that Syria welcomes cooperation with the Soviet Union on unconditional bases."

The Syrian press continues to comment on the agreement. The Damascus daily AL-AYYAM said that the agreement was a natural consequence of the West's policy and that the principle of unconditional aid has been approved by the Arab states and advocated by the four Arab leaders at their historical meetings.

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SYRIA

Aug. 9, 1957

The paper went on to say that this agreement was in fact in the interest of both Syria and the Soviet Union, as Syria has secured aid from a great friend like the Soviet Union while the Soviet Union itself foiled the attempts to eliminate it from Syria and other free peoples in the Middle East. The paper said there is no doubt that the Western states were disturbed by the agreement. They are the ones to be held responsible for this because it came as a result of their foolish imperialist policy which they have and are still pursuing by supporting and arming Israel while withholding arms from the Arabs and persisting in suppressing the independence movements in Algeria, Oman and other places.

ASH-SHAH says: We are now faced with the colonizer and foreigners. This is the only course before us. Those who in regard to previous arms deals feared threats should now proceed in this new course as long as it is free of any restrictions.

AL-JUMHUR said that in signing the agreement with Russia, Syria did not deviate from the policy of positive neutrality and that the statement was a clear proof of the policy of nonalignment.

AN-NUR, organ of the outlawed Communist Party in Syria, said that socialist markets are a great support for small states and that this agreement has removed all imperialist restrictions.

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SYRIA
Aug. 12, 1957

TARAZI CLARIFIES SYRIA-USSR STATEMENT

Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 10, 1957, 0915 GMT--M
(Text)

Damascus--Clarifying the Syrian-Soviet joint statement which was issued last Tuesday, Dr. Salah at-Tarazi, secretary general of the Syrian Foreign Ministry, said that the statement does not directly approve specific agreements but opens the door to such agreements which, no doubt, will be subject to studies and discussions between experts of the two sides and the assemblies which represent the people in ratifying various legal steps in this respect."

Dr. at-Tarazi said that the objectives of the joint statement "do not deviate from the Bandung Conference's resolutions nor from the positive neutrality upon which Syria's present policy is based." He added: "The imperialist enemies of Syria do not want Syria to break their economic blockade. They also oppose any measure to strengthen Syria, because they want it to remain weak and incapable of repelling aggression."

In a statement broadcast last night from the government controlled Syrian broadcasting station, Ghalib al-Kayyali, director of the broadcasting station, said that Syria has moved from its passive attitude to that of initiative in the international political field now that it has crushed a series of international plots concocted against it." He said that the enemies of Syria will eventually find themselves on the defensive, a thing they will not like very much.

Comparing Syria's attitude with that of other Arab states, Al-Kayyali said: "As for the Arab states now siding with the Baghdad Pact and the Eisenhower doctrine, they have lost every pretext to justify this attitude, and the governments of these states are in constant fear.

Al-Kayyali added: "The Soviet Union helps us because its interest coincide with ours. Arab unity is advantageous to it for it halts imperialist influence in the Middle East. The objectives of Western policy and world Zionism are, however, economic interests, aggressive strategic interests, and the protection of Israel. Al-Kayyali further said that "the Soviet Union does not offer such aid as charity or for the sake of blue eyes. Nevertheless, it helps us, supports our policy, creates various means to safeguard our security, because it believes that this is in its own interest."

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SYRIA
Aug. 12, 1957

The daily AL-HADARAH today urged the holding of an extraordinary session of the Chamber of Deputies "since this session has become a necessity in order to block any attempt aiming at weakening the government's stand toward the successful negotiations held in Moscow."

No Assembly Session

Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 12, 1957, 1010 GMT--M

(Excerpt)

Damascus--Salih Aqil, Syrian Minister for Propaganda and Information Affairs, has declared that the plan for the Syrian Chamber of Deputies to hold an extraordinary session and debate the recent Syrian-Soviet agreement, which was concluded in Moscow during the visit of the Syrian delegation under the chairmanship of Khalid al-Azm, has been abandoned.

Al-Azm Evades Questions

London, REUTERS, Radioteletype in English to North America, Aug. 10, 1957, 1542 GMT--E

(Text) ..

Geneva--Khalid al-Azm, Syrian Defense Minister arrived here today in a special Czechoslovak plane from Prague on his way back to Damascus after a visit to the Soviet Union. The Defense Minister evaded questions from correspondents about whether he had arranged to buy arms from the Soviet Union or Czechoslovakia.

"In the past, whatever we have said about buying or not buying arms has been taken as an excuse to deliver arms to Israel. This time we are adopting another policy of not saying anything about whether or not we have purchased arms," he said.

The Syrian party was flying on to Damascus later today in a regular airliner.

(Editor's Note: Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 11, 1957, 0900 GMT reported from Damascus that official circles expect all Syrian delegates will have returned home by Aug. 14, with some expected in Damascus Aug. 12)

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SOVIET CULTURAL AGREEMENT--Dr. Salah at-Tarazi, secretary general of the Syrian Foreign Ministry, received the Soviet ambassador to Damascus Aug. 10 in connection with the implementation of the cultural agreement which was concluded between Syria and the Soviet Union last year. (Beirut, ANA, Aug. 10, 1957, 1640 GMT--M)

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Soviet Penetration:

There has been a decline in Middle East comment on the talks between Syrian and Soviet and Czech leaders. Damascus radio carries the statement issued at the conclusion of the Syrian delegation's Prague visit which says Czechoslovakia will send economic and technical experts to Syria. There is no mention of Syria's sending anything to the Czechs.

Discussing the Soviet decision to aid Syria, an Amman radio commentary says the Soviet aim "is to turn Syria into a Russian political and military base" and that "nobody doubts the fact that Syria has accepted the Russian terms in advance." Another opinion on why the USSR is aiding Syria comes from Syrian radio chief Al-Kayyali, who says, according to an APOL NEWS AGENCY report, that "the USSR does not offer such aid as charity or for the sake of our blue eyes." It offers aid "because it believes that it is in its own interest."

The Syrian-Soviet statement does not approve "specific agreements," ANA reports the secretary general of the Syrian Foreign Ministry as saying, "but opens the door to such agreements." Cairo radio quotes the report of the Syrian paper AR-RAI AL-AAM that Syria has already signed an agreement with the USSR to purchase 200,000 tons of Syrian wheat. In a statement over Damascus radio upon his return from Prague and Moscow, the Syrian army chief of staff tells listeners "the Soviets want only our friendship" and thus wish to support legitimate Arab questions and "offer unconditional aid to help Syria overcome hardships resulting from its stand against imperialist plots."

Reports of the arrival of Soviet arms in Yemen elicits comment only from the Israeli press as quoted in the press review. In general Israeli papers look on the arrival of the arms in Yemen as something that concerns other nations much more than Israel, in particular the Western powers and Saudi Arabia.

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A Moscow broadcast in Arabic quotes a Cairo commentator as saying that the British aggression in Oman, following the aggression in Egypt, so increases tension that it could lead to the "launching of an atomic war." A Viktorov commentary in Greek and Arabic quotes a "British army representative" as saying that "the real war has not started" and says that this means the attack on Oman will be intensified. A Nekrasov article from PRAVDA, broadcast on the home service, says the Americans are urging that the Oman fighting be concluded quickly in order to avoid "discrediting the Eisenhower doctrine."

Other comment on the Middle East is largely concerned with the recognition of the Tunisia Republic. TASS carries the congratulatory message from Voroshilov to Bourguiba, and an Arabic commentator, contrasting Soviet and Western policies toward the Arab world, says "it is no accident" that the Soviet Union was the first country to recognize Tunisia. Another Arabic commentary, referring to reports that France has decided to resume its aid to Tunisia, says this is only part of the policy of trying to regain control of the country. The commentator adds that the United States is ready to help France both "politically and militarily."

The Prague home service and CTK continue to publicize the visit of the Syrian Defense Minister and his party. A communique on the talks, released by CTK, says views were exchanged on questions of interest to the two countries and that Czechoslovakia will send economic experts to Syria and train Syrian workers for industrial plants Czechoslovakia is building in Syria. In a farewell speech over the Prague home service, Syrian Defense Minister al-Azm thanked the Czechs for the assistance given the Arabs in achieving a "victory of justice over foreign imperialists."

All East European transmitters to give wide attention to the Oman situation, describing it as a battle of Arab nationalism against the imperialists and as an Anglo American fight for power in the Middle East.

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AD-DIN PRAISES RECEPTION IN MOSCOW

Damascus, in Arabic to Syria and the Near East, Aug. 11, 1957, 1615 GMT--M

(Statement by Maj. Gen. Tawfiq Nizam ad-Din, chief of the general staff of the Syrian army)

(Text)

The critical period of tension prevailing in the world for a long time has affected the Middle East from the date of creation of Israel when imperialist pressure and plots increased against the Arabs. This culminated in the great danger to which Egypt and Arabism were exposed during the Suez events, as a result of which the true nature of imperialism was exposed. At the same time appeared the decisive will of the freedom-loving states to stop the aggression and condemn war and force as a means of settling differences between nations.

Foremost among these friendly freedom-loving states was the Soviet Union when it took a decisive step by stopping further aggression and warning the aggressors beforehand that they would bear the consequences of their crimes against peace, in addition to other stands which the Soviet Union maintained in the United Nations toward Arab questions. After all this, the natural outcome was that we had direct contact with the responsible authorities in the Soviet Union and conveyed to them the gratitude of the Arab people in general and the Syrian people in particular.

Furthermore, this unbiased attitude on the part of the Soviet authorities encouraged us to speak to them frankly about the hardships experienced by our country, hardships caused by imperialism and Zionism in order to prevent its development and improvement of its economic situation, as well as to prevent it from attaining economic and political freedom and to weaken its defense potentialities.

The first thing we made clear to the Soviet authorities was that Syria, people and government, attaches deep faith to positive neutrality and considers this policy as a basis of its relations with all states in the world. That is why Syria has rejected with obstinacy and determination all the conditional aid offered to her; as it also refused to join any pact or defense organization in whatever form it may be, such as the Baghdad Pact, the Eisenhower Doctrine, and others.

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This is in pursuance of the policy which Syria has reached following the long struggle of its people and after fully liberating itself from foreign interference. Thus, when we welcome any aid for our people we are doing so on the basis of our belief of nonalignment and non-restriction of our political and economic freedom, and also on the basis of not endangering our sovereignty and nationalism.

Upon arriving in the Soviet Union we saw indeed the genuine desire of the Soviets to support our legitimate Arab positions and to extend unconditional aid to meet all economic hardships which Syria is facing as a result of its stand against imperialist plots. The Soviets want only our friendship and the friendship of all the freedom-loving and self-liberating peoples of the world.

What we appreciated throughout our tour was that all the Soviet people support our position and welcome our friendship. We felt the indescribable love, friendship, and full respect which the Soviet people harbor for us in our struggle for our freedom. We also felt in all our official and nonofficial contacts that the Soviet Union has no expansionist aims, and that the desire of the Soviet people is to exploit the resources of their country and to raise their standard of living. We did not find anyone wishing to interfere in the internal affairs of our country; we found only support for our Arab position and our struggle against imperialism and Zionism.

The Soviet people, who suffered the bitter catastrophes of World War II, are anxious to strengthen the pillars of peace in the world and to do their level best to avoid a war which will affect their prosperity. There is no doubt that the true desire for peace and noninterference in the affairs of others are the things which encourage friendship with the Soviet Union.

We in Syria and in the self-liberated Arab countries should not let threats and such tactics as political and economic pressure force us to deviate from our national objectives. And we should give our friendship only to those who befriend us. We should not be affected by the biased propaganda launched by imperialism and its supporters about the intentions of the Soviet Union in an attempt to keep us under its domination, isolate us from the world, and threaten our people with hunger and death.

We have already tested the sweetness of sovereignty and freedom. We should not permit imperialism and Zionism to dominate us again through their plans and pacts, no matter how concealed these are and no matter what means imperialism uses in advancing them.

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On this occasion we should like to refer to the welcome, hospitality, and true love we received during our visit to Czechoslovakia. We were also pleased to find in the Soviet Union sincere friends who understand our true problems, support our struggle, and offer us unconditional aid that we will be able to overcome all our political and economic hardships.

The most important thing we came across was the good reputation of the Syrian people against imperialism. This reputation has reached such an extent that the peoples in the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia now look upon the Syrian people as legendary heroes fighting for the sake of freedom and world peace. We have returned from this visit confident that when we are attacked there will be our friends who will defend us for the sake of peace and in support of the peoples' right to freedom and national sovereignty.

(Editor's Note: Damascus Home Service at 1115 GMT on Aug. 11, 1957, reported that General Tawfiq Nizam ad-Din arrived in Damascus by air, accompanied by some members of the delegation.)

Wheat Agreement

Damascus, Egyptian Home Service, Aug. 11, 1957, 1400 GMT--M

(Text rpt)

Meanwhile, the Syrian paper AR-RAI AL-AAM said that the Syrian and Soviet sides have signed an agreement under which the Soviet Union pledges to purchase 200,000 tons of Syrian wheat from this year's harvest, provided that the payment of half the price is in hard currency and the other half in machinery and tools which Syria might need.

Report from Prague

Damascus, in Arabic to Syria and the Near East, Aug. 11, 1957, 0415 GMT--M

(Text)

The following statement has been issued on the visit to Czechoslovakia of the Syrian delegation under the chairmanship of Khalid al-Azm:

"In response to the invitation of the Czechoslovak Government, a Syrian Government delegation under the chairmanship of Khalid al-Azm, Minister of State and Acting Defense Minister, visited Czechoslovakia Aug. 7-8, 1957. Among the members of the Syrian Government delegation were Fakhir al-Kayyali, Minister of Public Works and Communications; Maj. Gen. Tawfiq Nizam ad-Din, Syrian army chief of staff; and Adnan Azhari, Syrian Minister to Prague. The delegation was received by Czechoslovak President Zapotocky, Premier William Siroky, Foreign Trade Minister Richard Dvorak, and Acting Defense Minister General Vaclav Kratochvil.

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"During their stay in Czechoslovakia, the members of the Syrian delegation visited a number of towns, and economic, cultural, and social organizations. During the discussions, which took place in an atmosphere of friendly relations, views were exchanged about matters of importance to the Czech Republic and the Syrian Republic. The discussions also dealt with matters connected with the development of the existing friendly relations. The expansion of economic relations were discussed on the basis of full equality and mutual benefits. The strengthening and expanding of economic relations must lead to the speeding up of the development of the Syrian national economy."

"Czechoslovakia will send to Syria, under the provisions on technical aid, missions of technical experts in economic fields. Czechoslovakia will undertake to train Syrian experts in the administration of industrial establishments which Czechoslovakia will build for Syria."

"The visit of the Syrian delegation is important in strengthening the friendly relations between the Czechoslovak and Syrian republics and at the same time furthers the consolidation of world peace."

CLOSER CHECK PLACED ON OFFICIALS' MOVES

Damascus, in Arabic to Syria and the Near East, Aug. 11, 1977, 1415 GMT--M

(Text)

The office of the Premier has issued the following communique: "In the interest of the state requires that every official and employee should stay within Syrian territory, and that he should not leave it unless by permission of the Minister concerned. Officials and employees who leave Syria without obtaining prior permission from the Minister. Violation of this regulation will call for disciplinary action to be taken. The Ministry has instructed security posts on borders to see that officials and employees obtain the necessary permission before they cross the borders. Damascus, Aug. 11, 1977."

WASHINGTON AMBASSADOR--Foreign Minister al-Bitar on Aug. 11 received Farid Zayn ad-Din, Syrian ambassador in Washington, and discussed with him Arab questions which will be submitted to the United Nations in its forthcoming session. He then received Haydan Mardam, Syrian minister in Baghdad, and discussed with him relations between Syria and Iraq and Syria's attitude toward certain Arab question and its desire to improve its relations with the Arab states. (Cairo, Aug. 11, 1977, 2000 GMT--M)

WEST INSINCERELY CRITICIZES MOSCOW TALK

Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 12, 1957, 1636 GMT--M

(Text)

Damascus--An official Syrian source today described the discussions conducted by the Syrian delegation headed by Khalid al-Azm, the Syrian Minister of State and Deputy Defense Minister, in Moscow and Prague as constituting a natural part of a policy of positive neutrality and nonalignment emanating from the interests of Syria and the Arab countries which Syria is practicing with much determination and scrutiny in order to realize economic prosperity and insure its integrity and sovereignty.

The source said that the objective of the uproar aroused by certain Western countries about the Syrian delegation's mission in the Soviet Union is to create a new excuse in order to exert pressure on Syria with the hope of making it amend or change the inclination of its foreign policy. The source added that this uproar indicates premeditated bad will since Afghanistan, India, Indonesia, Burma, and other Asian countries have preceded us in concluding agreements similar to the Syrian economic agreement without raising any uproar like the one which was aroused about Syria.

The source went on to say that public opinion will be acquainted with the details of the results reached by the Syrian delegation when the draft agreements concluded by it during its visit to Russia and Czechoslovakia are referred to the Chamber of Deputies for approval in accordance with the constitutional procedures. The source added that the Soviet Union has responded to Syria's policy aiming at obtaining financial and technical aid to realize its economic development provided that this aid is devoid of any condition which would breach its independence and sovereignty.

The Soviet Union, he said, has expressed its readiness to offer the required aid without any condition or obligation being attached. This has been an exception among promises for aid given us in conjunction with conditions conflicting with our sovereignty and our eagerness to exercise this sovereignty in an atmosphere of complete independence. The source has asserted once more Syria's eagerness to carry on with the policy of nonalignment and treating all countries on an equal footing--the policy adopted by the Bandung Conference.

AGRICULTURE MINISTER LEAVES FOR MOSCOW

Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 12, 1957, 0912 GMT--M

(Summary)

Damascus--At midnight last night, a Syrian agricultural delegation under the chairmanship of Hamid al-Khuja, Syrian Minister of Agriculture, left Damascus for Moscow in response to the invitation of the Soviet Minister of Agriculture to attend the agricultural exhibition there.

(Editor's Note: Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 11, 1957, 1607 GMT reported that al-Khuja told reporters he will take the opportunity to discuss problems of Syrian cotton with representatives of the USSR, Poland, East Germany, and Czechoslovakia. He added that he will spend 10 days in Moscow and 10 days in the other three countries.)

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Aug. 15, 1951

AL-AZM REFUSES TO COMMENT ON HUSAYNI

Damascus, in Arabic to Syria and the Near East, Aug. 14, 1951, 1815 GMT--

(Text)

Khalid al-Azm returned from his successful trip last night. He was preceded by many rumors in Syria which distorted a large part of his statements. If some of these statements were distorted unintentionally, others were definitely distorted intentionally.

This morning our correspondent met Khalid al-Azm at his home in Dimaer and asked him about his trip to the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia. He also asked him about his meeting in Rome with Col. Ibrahim al-Husayni and about his statements in this connection to correspondents of foreign press and news agencies in Italy.

Al-Azm promised to issue on Friday a comprehensive statement about the outcome of his trip affirming that the trip was successful and that both the Soviet people and government have a deep friendship for Syria and the Arab people. The minister added that the joint statements released in Moscow and in Prague contain all the negotiations conducted and the broad lines agreed upon by both sides. He affirmed that the outcome of the talks will help Syria develop its economy and that the Soviet Union respects the independence of Syria and the Arab states and their desire to preserve their full sovereignty. The Soviet Union refrains from interfering in the affairs of these countries wishing them all the best and expressing its readiness to support its independent policy.

The minister then compared the offers made by the International Bank for assisting Syrian economy and the Soviet offers. He pointed out that the international bank negotiated with Syria in a manner as if to impose its will over Syria. The bank wanted to choose the companies which were to execute the projects. It also wanted to supervise Syria's economy using this as a pretext for guaranteeing its loans. On the other hand the Soviet offers are unconditional and do not depend on eventualities.

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When the correspondent asked Khalid al-Azm about his meeting with Col. Ibrahim al-Husayni, he said that the journalists in Rome surrounded him and asked his opinion about the plot exposed by the Syrian authorities. He told them that his information on the subject was derived from their own sources and that he did not hear anything particular about the matter. He refused to express his opinion on the question of the complicity of Colonel al-Husayni in the conspiracy. He stated that he had met him in Rome but knew nothing about the nature of the connection of Al-Husayni in the matter.

Al-Azm affirmed that reports on Syria are distorted for specific aims. He warned against serious attention being paid to everything that is published about Syria's policy, in particular, and about the political conditions in the Middle East, in general.

Press Comment

Cairo, Egyptian Home Service, Aug. 14, 1957, 1430 GMT--M

(From the world press review)

(Summary)

The Syrian newspaper BARADA has reviewed western relations with the Arabs on the occasion of the conclusion of the latest Syrian-Soviet agreement. Under the headline A New Era, the paper says: "For over 40 years the Arabs cooperated with the Western powers. During these years we joined the first world war on the side of Britain and France in order to deliver ourselves from the Turkish yoke, to attain recognition of our independence, and to achieve unity for the sake of which our martyrs died. But our reward from these two powers was that they colonized our countries, divided them into small states, looted our wealth, humiliated our good men, and let our evil men rule us. They also made Palestine, the most sacred part of our countries, a national home for the criminals of the world."

"In the second world war, we stood by the side of the allies and used all our resources and wealth to make our enemies victorious. Our reward from them was the usurping of Palestine and the establishment of an intruder state. They provided this state with all means of life and strength to enable it to annihilate us, loot our homelands, and expand in these homelands at our expense. Our reward from them was to shatter our unity, colonize our countries, loot our wealth and oil, and set their armies and the armies of the gangster state upon us."

"They were not satisfied with this. They picked the bad people from among us, and made them rulers in some of our countries, so that they might sign on behalf of our peoples, pacts and agreements which would allow our countries to be occupied and our peoples become slaves. This is what we got for cooperating 40 years with the West, until God sent us President Jamal Abd an-Nasir and his colleagues, the commanders of the revolution in Egypt."

The Arabs changed the tactics of this shameful and humiliating cooperation and adopted the policy of neutrality. They broke the seige and extended their hand to the honorable rulers in the world, cooperating and dealing with them to limit the oppression of imperialism which was trying to dominate the Arabs. Thus they led the way for us, we in Syria. We also looked toward these honorable rulers and found in them honest friends, who ask nothing from us but to keep away from blocs and pacts which would make us their enemies. This is the least that a friend can ask of a friend.

The agreement which was signed in Moscow shall be the opening of a new era between the Soviet Union and all the Arabs. Because the strengthening and development of Syria economically and industrially will make it able to resist and destroy the plots and intrigues which imperialism engineered against it. Thus the hour when the Arabs will get rid of imperialism draws near. Imperialism will then be expelled from its last positions, which began to shake as a result of Arab consciousness, and Arab nationalism will then attain what it wants and the Arabs will occupy a high position among the nations."

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S Y R I A

Aug. 16, 1957

AL-AZM EFFORTS ON MOSCOW AGREEMENTS

Damascus, in Arabic to Syria and the Near East, Aug. 16, 1957, 0500 GMT--M

(Statement by Minister of State and Acting Defense Minister Khalid al-Azm)

(Text)

Dear compatriots. The Syrian Government delegated us to convey to the Soviet Union, both government and people, greetings from the Syrian government and people for the support and backing the Soviet Union has given to our problems, support not only on the political side, whether in the United Nations or other world political quarters, but also on the military side, when it enabled us to purchase arms to increase the strength of our beloved army. Besides these essentials, there was also the necessity of supporting our economy and our trade from all aspects. Therefore, the government sent us to convey to the Soviet Union, besides this greeting, a true picture of our situation in this part of the Arab East.

We were met with hospitality and welcome in these lands, by those in office, by the people, and particularly by workers whose factories we visited. This hospitality was not accorded us just because we were official representatives of the Syrian Government. It went beyond us to embrace all members of the Syrian delegation to the Moscow festival. Whenever we passed through the streets, we saw the enormous crowds which surrounded members of the Syrian delegation to the festival, expressing welcome, hospitality, and attachment. This made us realize that the name of Syria is very popular there and that the Syrians enjoy a large measure of love and respect.

As I said before, our talks dealt with our economic affairs. Since Syria achieved sovereignty in 1943 successive governments have studied with the advice of domestic and foreign experts the vital schemes required for us to bolster our political independence. There were numerous studies, some of which were completed, accomplished, and put into special files, and others which were not completed and not even begun. We have an opinion regarding the total requirements for these projects which would bolster our economy and bring it to the level we desire.

Among the prominent projects is that for the railways and roads and air and sea transport. All of us know that the railways existing in Syria are a legacy from the concessions obtained by foreign companies. Some of these railways have a broader gauge than others. Links among the Arab states were nonexistent. The railway network here was small.

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Therefore, we had to study railway affairs and to make the railways perform the service we require by linking the agricultural land which produces our harvests with the seaport which we established in the town of Latakia.

The Ministry of Public Works made the studies for these projects, and a world company submitted a detailed study in a number of volumes covering our needs in this field, such as the laying of a new railway line between Latakia and Al-Qamishli and then linking it with the Baghdad line. The cost of this long line was estimated at 550 million Syrian pounds. There is also the project for linking Damascus with Homs via An-Nabk by railway which would be joined to the general railway network.

Besides the railway, there are several projects for connecting a number of roads, thus making them suitable for truck transportation, particularly from Al-Jazirah to the sea. We are also in need of sea transportation to insure the delivery of goods to foreign ports or to import the goods which we require from abroad. Besides this there is air transportation of which we have a small nucleus between Syria, Egypt, and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and we want to expand it to cover Europe also. We also have another project for enlarging Latakia port. Before its expansion is accomplished, scheduled for autumn, its administrators realize that it is too small to cope with the number of cargo ships which carry the imports and exports. It is also contemplated to expand the port further and to lengthen the quays where the ships anchor.

There are also irrigation and well projects. You know that our country is originally agricultural and that it requires many irrigation projects to increase the area under cultivation and consequently increase our agricultural crops. The irrigation projects are summed up in building new dams on the large rivers in Syria, and at the same time we shall be able to generate electricity and use electric power in factories for lighting and other purposes.

The water stored behind these dams in the winter can be distributed in the summer. Thus we shall be able to double the area of our agricultural land. These projects cost enormous sums. One of the prominent projects is (word indistinct) (Al-Fasha) which according to expert estimates generates more than (90,000?) kilowatts, in other words, more than 150,000 horsepower.

There are also a number of projects to construct assembly plants for tractors, other agricultural machines, and for cars. We use many cars and agricultural machines. All these machines are imported from abroad against payment. They may break down and they remain unproductive. We are also contemplating the establishment of factories to make spare parts for these tractors and cars locally, so they will be serviceable and give good use in agriculture.

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Besides there are other factories which we have yet not been able to establish. We are also contemplating their establishment unless individual capital (is able?) to undertake it.

Former governments and the present government conducted several studies and determined to obtain the money required for the implementation of these projects. The World Bank was difficult. Talks had been conducted between the Syrian delegation and the World Bank in 1954-55 to obtain the loans required, but regrettably we were unable to accept the terms of the contracts because they would have imposed on us intolerable and (impractical?) terms, such as submitting to the bank the names of the commercial establishments and companies we want to contract, obtaining the bank's approval before concluding contracts with them, and informing it of the method of exploiting the land and its distribution among the people, and securing the approval of a special committee to be set up by the bank.

These arbitrary terms were incompatible with the principle of independence and freedom to which we adhere. Consequently, the representatives delegated by the government to discuss these subjects were unable to recommend that the government accept these terms. Therefore these projects remained pending. Some of them were financed by the government from its own revenue such as Al-Ghab project, and others remained at the paper work and file stage because the government was unable to find the money for their implementation.

As you know, unless political independence is coupled with economic independence, one cannot feel that this independence is secure. A strong national economy is the real support of political independence. Therefore, we decided to approach the Soviet Union with these projects and discussed them in Moscow. Naturally, our discussion was not detailed because there were just two of us, my colleague the Minister of Public Works and myself, and we had no technicians with us. We only wished to reach a preliminary agreement with the government of the Soviet Union. If we reached an agreement on these subjects in principle, talks between the experts of both sides could begin to conclude these agreements in detail.

We were able to reach agreement as we mentioned in the joint statement which was announced in Moscow when we were there and with which you became acquainted here. Accordingly we agreed with the government of the Soviet Union to undertake these projects jointly, after the experts have submitted to both sides the details of the projects. The expense of these projects will be paid by the Syrian Government in long-term installments. This will cover the cost of the goods, machines, and spare parts we shall import from the Soviet Union and the wages of the workers and technical experts which we shall require from it. As for the wages of local workers, the salaries of the local employees, the cost of the raw materials which will be used in these projects, such as sand, gravel, stone, cement, and so forth--they shall be supplied by the government.

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We are proud to mention that these agreements will be concluded according to the principle already agreed upon and will not be coupled with any political or economic strings. The Soviet Union as you know and as we believed and were convinced of during our trip does not want to interfere in our affairs nor does it want to interfere in our political or social systems. It wants Syria to have a strong economy to support Syria's political independence.

The Russians have no ambitions in our country. Their country is enormous. If one looks at the map, one sees that the Soviet Union extends from the borders of Poland to the Sea of Japan--an enormous land, more than 1,000 times the area of Syria. Much of this land has not yet been exploited. The Soviet Union is now constructing large dams to increase the irrigable land and to generate electricity in order to build factories run by electric power. This land, as we were told, is enough to give employment to the workers and the productive minds of the Soviet Union for several years, which does not call for territorial expansion into any other country. Thus neither Syria nor any other country falls within the framework of territorial ambitions.

Also, as you may know, the Soviet regime does not comprise exploiting companies, and therefore, contrary to other countries, they do not seek to insure the benefits of companies belonging to them. All their functions belong to the government and the people, and there are no exploiting companies which the Soviet Union seeks to support or (two words indistinct). Thus, they want us independent, and they bolster our freedom in accordance with the general principles which they advocate for the whole world, and not only for Syria.

The Soviet Union has given us political support and supplied us with arms, which we were unable to obtain any place other than the Soviet Union. Its stand during the aggression was honorable as you well remember; how you and we during those dark nights observed events; how we received the reports of the Soviet intervention in the subject; how this intervention eventually saved freedom and peace and restored reassurance to the countries of the Middle East and delivered the Arabs from the major catastrophe which imperialism wanted to inflict upon them. The Soviet Union, in our belief, will continue along this line, because it is determined--it and the free countries of the world in Europe, Asia, Africa, and certain states in America--to continue adopting their general principles; namely, to bolster freedom in the world, to bolster the independence of countries regardless of where they are situated, and to insure self-determination for the individual.

We told them that we are determined to defend our independence and freedom, a determination which knows no retreat or despair, and that we are determined to sacrifice every drop of our blood in defending our freedom and independence even if we are left alone. I am certain that from now on we shall not be alone.

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I believe that the aforementioned projects will expand the agricultural land and will insure the improvement of conditions for the farmers to a great extent by securing irrigation for new lands and the lands which are being exploited at present despite the water shortage. The farmer as well as all of us knows that the country is now suffering a water shortage. The water which is being exploited is not enough for the land under cultivation. In the winter we have much water which is not exploited in the summer and is washed away to the sea. If we construct these dams and save the water for the summer, we shall be able to irrigate the land with an abundant supply of water and we shall be able to reclaim new land which now has no irrigation water.

In regard to our harvest we are now weighed down with much expensive transportation. Al-Jazirah people in particular know how much it costs them to take their wheat and barley to Latakia harbor, because the means of communications and the conditions of the roads do not permit reduced transportation costs. When the railway is established and road networks are constructed in a manner suitable to cope with traffic and heavy trucks, transportation expenses will be reduced and consequently the cost of Syrian crops will be cut, and we shall be able to compete more fully abroad, or at least we can meet the competition with lower prices.

These preliminary agreements also include the construction of many factories, which will be of great benefit to the workers by increasing the jobs which they can do at suitable wages, thus giving them the means to insure their personal and family requirements.

With regard to our agricultural crops which have suffered a slump this year, we have reached agreement with the Soviet Union and the government of Czechoslovakia that they will purchase the wheat, barley, cotton, and silk products which we wish to export. They are ready to purchase all the quantities we offer because they are only a small part of what (they propose to?) purchase. In the near future a Syrian Government delegation for detailed talks with the Soviet Union and Czechoslovakia will depart to conclude the detailed agreement on shipping grain to these countries and on insuring their disposal at good prices. Thereby, we will have rescued ourselves from the economic blockade which certain countries seek to impose on us.

I conclude my statement by thanking the Soviet Union and the government of Czechoslovakia for the deep understanding they expressed toward our problems and for their effective support of our political and economic issues. While I extend this word of thanks, I must pay tribute to the support given by the Syrian people to the Syrian delegation during its stay in the Soviet Union, as well as thanking Syrian public opinion which received these reports eagerly and supported the delegation openly and wholeheartedly.

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I conclude my statement hoping that the results of our economic talks will lead to the flourishing sought by all of us, so much so that our country during the coming years will be the theater for increased production, for satisfactory conditions for the (word indistinct) and to the farmers and of benefit to all. We will have thus bolstered our independence which we preserve with all our might.

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SYRIA
Aug. 19, 1957

Assembly Action Not Needed

Beirut, AIA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 17, 1957,
1200 GMT--M

(Text) Damascus--Ihsan al-Jabiri, chairman of the political committee of the Parliamentary National Front from which the present government emerged, said that Khalid al-Azm, Acting Defense Minister, in his capacity as chairman of the Syrian delegation to the discussions which recently took place in Moscow and Prague, submitted to the committee at a meeting this afternoon the results of the Moscow discussions. He said that after hearing these results the committee decided to thank the government for the agreements which the Syrian delegation had concluded and in which the security of the state and its interests were unconditionally taken into consideration.

Al-Jabiri added that Al-Azm told the committee in his capacity as Acting Defense Minister that the government has taken firm and reassuring measures for the people with regard to recent developments in Syria. Al-Jabiri added also that there is no need for the government to submit the agreements reached by the Syrian delegation during its visit to Moscow to the Chamber of Deputies for approval since they offer all necessary facilities to promote agriculture and the economy in Syria. He described these agreements as simply aid which the Syrian Government requires from the USSR to implement its projects.

In his capacity as chairman of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, Al-Jabiri said that he today received from the Syrian Government an invitation addressed to the committee to visit the Soviet Union. The invitation left it for him to decide on the date if he accepts.

(Editor's Note: Paris, AFP, Radioteletype in English to the Americas, Aug. 18, 1957, 2112 GMT reported that Al-Azm "announced today" that Al-Jabiri would "soon go to Moscow" and, according to Al-Azm, would "tell Soviet authorities about Syrian needs for experts of various types." The item added that "final details concerning this problem will be embodied in agreements to be concluded in Moscow or Damascus," according to Al-Azm.)

No Secret Protocols

Beirut, AIA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 18, 1957, 1300 GMT--M

(Text) (Editor's Note: Under a Damascus dateline, this item opened by noting that Al-Azm reported on Aug. 18 to the Foreign Affairs Committee on his Moscow trip and that Al-Bitar gave the committee information available on the plot to carry out a coup d'etat.)

Yesterday Khalid al-Azm addressed the political committee of the National Parliamentary Bloc about his discussions in Moscow. He also discussed the same subject at a cabinet meeting yesterday evening.

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SYRIA
Aug. 19, 1957

Following the meeting of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, Abd al-Wathab Hawmad, a leading member of the People's (Ash-Shab) Party, which is in the opposition, and a member of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, today answered a question from a journalist about the attitude of the opposition in regard to the discussions conducted by Khalid al-Azm in Moscow, saying:

"The information supplied by Khalid al-Azm and Salah ad-Din al-Bitar has made it clear to us that the matter is not one of conditional Soviet aid but rather one of Soviet financing of productive projects needed by Syria, on condition that Syria pays back such money within a fixed period and pays interest thereon at a rate of 2½ percent. Thus it is purely a commercial matter, and there are no restrictions or conditions involved."

Hawmad added that he asked Al-Azm and Al-Bitar as to whether there are any secret protocols or agreements accompanying these economic agreements, and that they categorically denied that there is anything which was not mentioned to the committee.

Following the meeting, Insan al-Jabiri, chairman of the Parliamentary Foreign Affairs Committee, stated that Al-Azm assured the committee that the financing of the Syrian projects will not take place by means of loans but on the basis of lending Syria the services of experts who will carry out technical work and be paid wages, and that Syria will pay back the cost of the necessary equipment by long-term installments with an interest of 2½ percent.

(Editor's Note: The item concluded by noting that Al-Bitar spoke of the nature of the propaganda certain quarters are conducting about the recently revealed plot. Al-Jabiri also said the committee heard Al-Bitar's contention that the time is "now opportune and appropriate to implement" a federation between Egypt and Syria. AGENCE FRANCE-PRESSE reported at 2120 GMT on Aug. 18 that Al-Jabiri said a special committee was formed to study this federation move.)

ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 6, 1957, 1015 GMT--H

(Part) Damascus--Syrian Minister of State Khalid al-Azm told reporters today that the first thing he said to responsible Soviet officials in Moscow was: "We, the Syrians, do not accept your communist creed, and we are not establishing our relations with you on the basis of communism. We are cooperating with you only on an honest international basis without having anything to do with ideologies and beliefs."

Al-Azm added that Soviet Premier Marshal Bulganin answered him saying that Russia does not impose communism on anybody and definitely does not interfere in Syria's internal affairs, and that its desire is to see Syria free and independent, free from the traces of imperialism and the domination of imperialists.

APPROVES MOSCOW DECISIONS

ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 18, 1957, 0945 GMT--M

Damascus--At a meeting held last night under the chairmanship of Premier Sabri al-Asali, the Syrian cabinet approved the agreements concluded by Khalid al-Azm, Minister of State and Acting Defense Minister, during his recent visit to Moscow and Prague. The cabinet decided to place the development board in Syria under the supervision of Khalid al-Azm and that the powers of the development board would include control of the construction projects on which implementation agreement was reached in the aforementioned agreements.

The cabinet also decided to add the following new members to the development board: Wajih as-Samman, director of the electricity establishment in Damascus; Abd al-Basit al-Khatib, director of Al-Ghab project; and Kamal Ghali, a prominent official of the Syrian customs directorate.

(Editor's Note: Two lines on background of development board omitted.)

The cabinet has asked the Ministry of National Economy to enter into talks with Russia and Czechoslovakia to bolster and expand trade between them and Syria.

SYRIA SIGNED NO MOSCOW AGREEMENTS

Beirut, AHA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 20, 1957, 1800 GMT--M

(Text) Damascus--Syrian Foreign Minister al-Bitar has stated that Syria did not sign any agreement with the Soviet Union. "All that has happened was that a joint communique was issued laying the principles which could be used as a basis for the growth of our economy and the development of our various conditions," he added. Al-Bitar made this statement during an interview he had yesterday with the correspondent of the American Universal Television Company which was released last night by the Syrian directorate general of propaganda and information.

Replying to a question about the causes that have led to the strengthening of relations between Syria and the Soviet Union, a development that has not taken place between Syria and many other countries, the Syrian Foreign Minister said: "There were no extraordinary factors that made our relations with the Soviet Union good and cordial. It is merely that the Soviet Union has fully understood the aims of the Arabs in their present historical era and has realized the legitimacy of these aims, and has thus based its relations with us on this realization. The Soviet Union has supported the Arab states in the international field on this basis."

Asked if Syria had rejected aid or a loan from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development about a year ago, he said: "Syria rejected the aid of the International Bank because the conditions which the bank laid down prevented the free and independent development of our country economically." Al-Bitar added: "Political conditions were attached to these loans. Of these, one condition stipulated that we should cooperate with the United Nations Works and Relief Agency on the problem of the refugees. This means that Syria would have had to follow the policy of the United States for the Middle East which seeks to make Israel's domination of the Arab homeland a legitimate matter and to impose peace upon us."

Al-Bitar added: "All this has taken place at a time when the United States was providing Israel with one and a half billion dollars worth of aid last year while it supplied the Arabs with a trifle."

Al-Bitar replied in the negative to a question about whether Syria's rejection of the Eisenhower plan was tantamount to rejection of all American aid. He said that Syria wanted to express its point of view to the American ambassador, the envoy of President Eisenhower, and would have accepted his visit, but it made the authorities concerned understand at the same time that Syria could not abandon its pure Arab nationalist policy. Al-Bitar added that Richards refused to visit Syria. "His refusal to visit Syria made us understand not only that the policy of the United States was not satisfied with our policy, but that it was determined to destroy our policy. One of the ways to achieve this destruction, the United States believes, is the withholding of loans."

Al-Bitar's opinion about the extent of the success of the United Nations. He said: "Every time the policy of the United States and the Soviet Union with the policy of the Soviet Union there is a success for the United Nations."

Aug. 20, 1957

SOVIET AGREEMENT PROVIDES FOR TWO SUBS

Cairo, MENA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 20, 1957, 0610 GMT--M

(Text) Cairo--Quoting its Alexandria correspondent, AL-JUMHURIYYAH reports that the agreement concluded between Syria and the Soviet Union provides for the purchase of two submarines for the Syrian Navy. Some of the Syrian officers graduated from the naval college in Alexandria have left for Poland to receive training in operating the two submarines.

Aug. 21, 1957

CZECH SOVIET AGREEMENTS MUST CHANGE

Beirut, ANA, in Arabic Code to the Near East, Aug. 20, 1957, 1915 GMT--M

(Text) Damascus--The secretary general of the Syrian Ministry of Economy, Husni as-Suwwan, said today that the Syrian Ministry of Economy has decided to inform the Soviet and Czechoslovak embassies in Damascus of the Syrian Government's desire to enter into urgent discussions with them for the revision of the economic agreements concluded between Syria and the Soviet Union and Syria and Czechoslovakia in such a way as to make these two agreements comply with the projects which the Syrian Government intends to implement and which the Russian Government has promised to finance. As-Suwwan expressed his belief that this revision will take place by the end of September.

It is worth mentioning that the economic agreement between Syria and Czechoslovakia was last reviewed on May 3 during the visit to Prague of Khalil al-Kallas, Syrian Minister of Economy.